

1829
The
Covenant
of the
New Society
Ministry

PAPERS
OF
SHAKERS

265

OHIO
Union Village

1777. 7. 11. 100

The
COVENANT

of the

West Family

In the United Society

(Commonly called Shakers,

in
Enfield

1829.

COLEMAN

plum tree

in the garden

of the house

in

the

1880

Introduction.

To all people to whom these presents shall come;
Know Ye,

That whereas we, the subscribers, of the Town of Enfield, in the County of Hartford, and State of Connecticut, having, by the grace of God, received faith in the testimony of Christ's Second Appearing; according to the principles and practice of the United Society, (commonly called Shakers) in said Enfield, and having become members of the Society aforesaid; and feeling a desire to unite together in the order and form of a family and religious Fraternity in gospel relation, according to the light and revelation of God, made known to us in the gospel;—and, also, having not only a lawful right to enter into a religious compact; but feeling confirmed and established in

our faith, that the aforesaid order is acceptable to God, and in accordance with the spirit of Christ; inasmuch as it enables us to be more useful to ourselves and each other in all things pertaining to our travel in the gospel, to receive, and more perfectly to improve the manifold gifts of God, both spiritual and temporal; for the mutual protection, support, comfort and happiness of each other, as Brethren and Sisters in the gospel, than any other situation in our knowledge.

Therefore, for the causes and purposes abovementioned, and for the better securing of our mutual rights and temporal interest from the attacks of unlawful aggression, we have mutually, freely and voluntarily entered into covenant with each other, in manner and form following: VIZ.

The Covenant of the West Family. &c.

Article 1st We covenant and agree that we will acknowledge and receive our faithful and beloved Brethren, viz. Philip Burlingame and John Foster as having the first care in spiritual things who have been appointed as such by the Elders at the South in said Enfield of whom we as a Family are a branch ^{Family} of the same, and of whom we expect to receive our appointments, orders and regulations, in all things both spiritual and temporal. And we also acknowledge * Brother Richard Fry as one that is appointed trustee, to trade and transact business for us in temporal concerns in ^{union} with the above named Philip and John. And we solemnly pledge ourselves in the presence of God and each other that we will as faithful Brethren and Sisters in Christ conform and subject
* Richard Fry Left us and returned to the West Philip Burlingame was put in his room

ourselves to all the appointments, rules and regulations which have been, or may hereafter be made by the aforesaid Elders. Provided always that those who have been or may hereafter be appointed in any care or trust in the West Family shall act in all things in union with those who have appointed them.

Art 2nd. We further covenant and agree to dedicate, devote and give up ourselves and services together with such a part or portion of our temporal interest (as we shall agree to have recorded in a book provided and kept for that and other like purposes,) to God and the family, for the upbuilding of our respective family, and other pious and charitable uses, to be under the care and direction of such appointments as have been or hereafter may be made, according to the first article of this covenant. We also agree that such a part or portion of our temporal interest

as we shall reserve for our heir or heirs shall be recorded in the above named book; and such property shall not be devoted only the use of it until said heir or heirs shall become of lawful age, or the time which the reserver shall see cause to mention in said book, at which time it shall be the duty of the trustee to pay to the said heir or heirs the sum which was reserved for them, the interest only excepted.

Art 3^d. We further covenant and agree, That it shall be the special duty of the trustees of the Family, appointed as aforesaid, to take the immediate charge and oversight of all, and singular the property, estate and interest dedicated, devoted and given up as aforesaid, together with all that may hereafter be so devoted and given up, which property, estate and interest shall constitute the joint interest of the Family, and shall be held as such

by the trustees in their official capacity. And it shall be the duty of the said trustees, to make all lawful defence for the protection and security of the joint interest and privileges of the Family; and, also, to appropriate, use and improve the joint interest of the Family, for the benefit of the Family, and such other pious and charitable uses as the gospel may require. ---

Provided always, that the management and disposal of the said interest and property by the said Trustees shall be for the benefit, and in behalf of the whole Family, to whom the said Trustees are, and shall be held accountable, and not for any personal or private use whatever. ---

Art. 4th We further covenant and agree, That the joint interest of the Family shall be held and possessed by the whole body jointly, as their natural and religious right; that is, all and

every individual of or belonging to the Family, shall enjoy equal rights and privileges, in the use of all things pertaining to the Family, according to their several needs and circumstances, without any difference being made on account of what any one has brought in, or may hereafter bring into the Family. And furthermore, That it shall be the duty of all the members, jointly and individually, to occupy and improve their time and talents, to support and maintain the aforesaid joint interest of the Family, according to their several abilities and callings, as members in joint union, so that the manifold gifts of God may be jointly improved for the mutual benefit of the whole Family.

Art. 5th. We do, by this covenant, solemnly and conscientiously, jointly and individually, for ourselves, our heirs, and assigns,

promise and declare, in the presence of God and each other,
and to all men, That we will never hereafter; neither directly
nor indirectly, make nor require any account of any interest,
property, labor or service, which has been, or may be devoted
by us, or any of us, to the purposes aforesaid; nor bring any
charge of debt or damage; nor hold any demand whatever,
against the Family or Society; nor against any member thereof
on account of any property or services devoted or consecrated to
the aforesaid sacred and charitable uses or purposes. — — —

Art. 6.th We further covenant and agree, That every person who shall,
after the date of this covenant, be admitted into the Family, as a
member thereof, in joint union, being of lawful age, shall previously
in the presence of at least two of the care-takers of the Family
read or hear distinctly read, to his or her full understanding,

this covenant, and shall be able, freely, voluntarily and con-
-sistently, to acquiesce in and acknowledge his or her full
approbation and acceptance of the same, in all its parts: —
Then he or she may have full liberty to sign this covenant, and
shall thenceforward be entitled to all the benefits and privileges
hereunto appertaining.

And the signature or signatures thus added,
shall be certified by the said Trustees in the following manner
viz. We A.B. and C.D. Trustees of the West Family at Enfield, Do certify that
E.F. being of lawful age, was, on this — day of — in the year of our Lord
one thousand eight hundred and —, duly admitted as a Member
of the Family, in joint union, according to the conditions stipulated in the sixth
article of the Family Covenant, and voluntarily signed the said covenant in our
presence.

A.B. }
C.D. } Trustees.

Art. 7.th We further covenant and agree, That it shall be the duty of the Trustees, to keep or cause to be kept in a book or books, provided for that purpose, a true copy of this covenant, together with all other records and transactions of a public nature, which may be necessary for the information and satisfaction of all concerned: and for the security of the joint interest of the Family, committed to their charge.

In confirmation of all the aforesaid statements, covenants, and articles of agreement, We have hereunto affixed our names and seals, in the presence of each other, beginning on this thirtieth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine. 

Philip Burlingame

John Foster

Richard Fry

Calth & Blanchard
mark

Arthur Damon

Simon Stace

Richard Lyon

Urbane Robinson

Waty Fry

Olive Damon

Fineelove Damon

Fanny Hancock

Lucina Damon

Waty ^{her}
~~X~~ Foster
mark

Polly Burlingame

Polly ^{her}
~~F~~ Foster
mark

John Miller

John Damon

Hawley Kellogg

Susanna ^{her} + Hall
mark

Mercy Burlingame

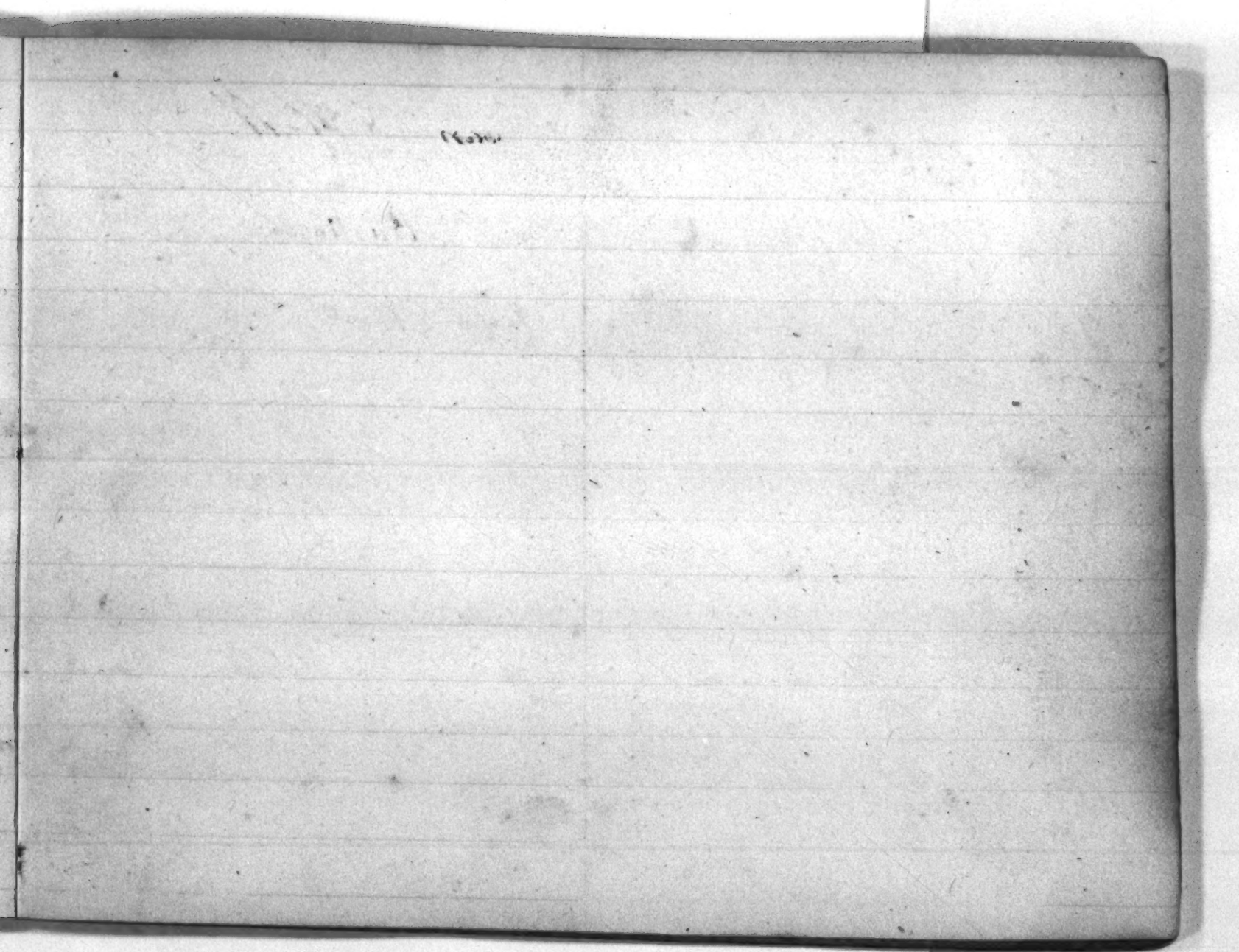
Lydia Bennett

Joanna ^{her} + Wells
mark

Peter Willcox

Susan Damon.

Hannah Blanchard



SHAKER COLLECTION

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